

1 Peter 3 - Wives and Husbands; Suffering for Righteousness Sake; Apologetics; Spirits in Prison; Jewish Baptism

II. Submission: duty of the Christian (1 Peter 2:11—3:12)

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1 Peter 3

(4) Submission within marriage (3:1-7)

(A) Wife's submission (3:1-6)

1 In the same way, you wives, **be subject** to your own husbands so that **even if** any of them are **disobedient** to the word, they may be won over **without a word** by the behavior of their wives,

1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

1 In a similar way, you wives must submit yourselves to your husbands so that, even if some of them refuse to obey the word, they may be won over without a word through your conduct as wives

1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

- "In the same way" - just as servants should be characterized by submission, wives should be also; this is also a divine duty as unto the Lord

- Peter begins with a command that seems the hardest and most unreasonable to many: the call for wives to submit to their husbands
- The command does not require women to be subordinate to men in general ("your own husband"), but to their husbands as a function of order within the home. This submission is exclusively within the marriage tie.
- "...even if" - the purpose of Peter's instruction is for all wives, whether or not the husband is a believer
- "...disobedient" - *apeitheō*, to have an antagonistic attitude; the husband described here is not just an unbeliever, he has an antagonistic attitude toward the gospel
- Even in this case, the wife must be submissive/submit to her husband
- "...without the word" - not with verbal pleas; the wife should not spend her time preaching to her husband
- She is not to have her own pulpit ministry at home; rather, it is the wife's actions (her behavior), not her words, that will ultimately win him to the Lord
- The powerful purity of a godly woman's life can soften even the stoniest male heart without a word (Titus 2:5)
- Where differences exist within marriages, words easily become weapons (Prov 21:9,19; 27:15-16; James 3:8-10). This is why Peter stresses conduct rather than words.

- 2 as they **observe** your pure and respectful behavior.
- 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.
- 2 when they see your pure and reverent lives.
- 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.
- "...observe" - refers to the husband's eyewitness observation of his wife's daily conduct; he will be gained by the eye, not by the ear

Marital Challenges

A wife is to accept her place in the family under the leadership of her husband, whom God has placed as head in the home. Wives are to be submissive even if their husbands are unbelievers, so those men might be saved by the behavior of their wives.

There are few experiences more difficult than to be united in marriage *to an unbeliever* (2 Cor 6:14-15). If one takes a superior attitude toward their mate, it will only stir up opposition to the truth and render conditions increasingly difficult. An imperious mate will drive their spouse further from God rather than draw them to Christ. Actions speak louder than words.

- 3 Your **adornment** must not be *merely* the external—braiding the hair, wearing gold *jewelry*, or putting on apparel;

3 Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;

3 Your beauty should not be an external one, consisting of braided hair or the wearing of gold ornaments and dresses.

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

- "...adornment" - *kosmos*, world, world order, universe; way of life (especially as opposed to the purpose of God); "to bring order out of chaos" (same root as the word "cosmetics")

— The Greek word normally refers to the ordered world-system that is under Satan's control. However, in this case, Peter is addressing the ordered system a woman uses in an attempt to appear externally beautiful.

— Peter doesn't say that external beauty is bad in any way, he is saying that between the two, internal beauty should be emphasized because it is eternal

— God gives physical beauty, but calls His people to seek the lasting beauty He prizes (1 Sam 16:7)

- Peter addresses three forms of outward adornment:

Some use this verse as the basis for teaching that women believers should neither braid their hair nor wear jewelry. If that were Peter's intent, then it would follow that these women should also be unclothed because he includes the putting on [of] apparel. However, all three statements must be kept in their own context. Peter does not condemn outward adornment. His point is that outward adornment should not be the primary focus; it should not be used for purposes of vanity.

4 but *it should be* the **hidden person of the heart**, with the **imperishable** quality of a **gentle** and **quiet spirit**, which is precious in the sight of God.

4 but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

4 Instead, it should be the inner disposition of the heart, consisting in the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which God values greatly.

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

- Scriptures do not forbid a measure of adornment of the person, but rather discourages *dependence* upon this to make one pleasing and attractive

— Outward adornment should be coupled with inward adornment because outward adornment is temporary

— A slovenly or homely person does not attract others, but one may be tastefully attired and immaculately groomed, and yet spoil everything by a haughty spirit or bad temper

- Peter did not state that women should not wear jewelry and nice clothes, but that Christian wives should not think of outer attire as the source of genuine beauty
- A woman who wins this kind of victory has a winsome loveliness that comes not from outward adornment but from her inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Tim 2:9-11)
 - "...hidden person of the heart" - the regenerated nature
 - In contrast to outward adornment, Christian wives should be developing inward adornment
 - "...imperishable" - in contrast to outward adornment, which is temporary and fades with age, the regenerated nature of inward adornment is not perishable and does not fade
 - "...gentle" - the manner of submission; wives should submit in gentleness while always being considerate
 - "...quiet" - emphasizes the attitude toward their husbands and life in general; it refers to having a quiet disposition in contrast to a noisy or loud attitude
 - "...spirit" - not the Holy Spirit, but a person's inner spirit; this is what wives should be developing
 - There is nothing wrong with exercising outward adornment, but the primary emphasis should be the development of the "spirit" (inward adornment)
 - The phrase "meek and quiet spirit" does not mean weakness or cowardliness (Cf. v6)

5 For in this way the holy women of former times, who hoped in God, also used to adorn themselves, being subject to their own husbands,

5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;

5 After all, this is how holy women who set their hope on God used to make themselves beautiful in the past. They submitted themselves to their husbands,

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

- A meek and quiet spirit (v4) is what female saints of the OT generally developed; Peter is encouraging the Jewish wives of his believing readership to follow in their footsteps

- This is a comment on the role of husbands and wives, not men and women in general (Cf. v1; Eph 5:22-24)

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, **calling him lord**; and you have proved to be her children if you do what is right without being **frightened** by any fear.

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters by doing good and by not letting anything terrify you.

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

- Peter uses Sarah, Abraham's wife, as an example:

- "...calling him lord" - Cf. Gen 18:12; the present participle indicates a habitual action on her part: she consistently referred to him as "lord"

- The point is that Sarah was obedient to her husband, and Peter is pointing out that obedient wives are now the true children of Sarah

- She even accommodated Abrahams's half-truths about her being his sister, etc. (Gen 20)

- "...frightened" - *ptoesis*, to be afraid of with terror; only usage of this word in the NT (Cf. Gen 18:12)

- Wives are not to be intimidated by societal pressures or to be intimidated by their husbands. Regardless of the cost, they are to remain true to the Word of God.

(B) Husband's submission (3:7)

7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with **someone weaker, *since she is* a woman; and **show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.****

7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

7 In a similar way, you husbands must live with your wives in an understanding manner, as with a most delicate partner. Honor them as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing may interfere with your prayers.

7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

- Although v7 begins a new paragraph, it correlates with v1-6

- Peter wants to prevent any wrong assumption on the part of husbands concerning his teaching of the wife's submission

- "...in the same way" - Peter is not saying that husbands are to be submissive to their wives just as wives are to be submissive to their husbands. That's not the reciprocation Peter is describing.

- It could better be translated "Husbands, for your part." Just as the wife has her commands, the husbands have commands from God of their own.

-- Peter wants to make sure that husbands don't take the "submission" command to their wives as an invitation to be tyrants and answerable to no one

-- Roman law in the first century gave every privilege to the husband and no privileges to the wife...a husband could kill his wife on the spot if she engaged in adultery, but the wife could not even touch a husband who did the same thing.

- "...live with *your wives* " - *synoikeō*, the meaning is much deeper than just cohabitation; the term encompasses all that married life involves, both the social and the sexual aspects of marriage

— The nearest English equivalent to the word "live" (or "dwell") is the idea of "to make a home with" but it means much more than simply living at the same address. To "live" with your wife means to invest, to share, to do life with her.

— A good marriage is not contagious—you can't catch it. You have to invest in it, pour time into your relationship.

- The idea of dwelling or living with your wife also includes dwelling sexually with their wives according to knowledge. The husband is to live with his wife sexually, according to knowledge concerning how to fulfill her sexual needs.

— "live" - present tense emphasizing continuous duty; the Greek form of the word, only used in this verse, carries the same concept as the Hebrew concept of "knowing," i.e. "knowing intimately" or "knowing sexually"

— It is used 5x in the OT [LXX] (Deut 22:17; 24:1; 25:5; Prov 19:14; Is 62:5) and means "to live together as husband and wife"

- "...in an understanding way" - meaning "to dwell with your wife according to knowledge."

Two types of knowledge: intellectual knowledge and personal knowledge

- Intellectual knowledge
 - All information that you can gather that is beneficial to the husband-wife relationship, including:
 - knowledge of God's purposes
 - knowledge about biblical principles of marriage (studying God's Word and books by Christian authors)
- Personal knowledge
 - Knowledge about every bit of information you can gather...her favorite foods, her favorite hobbies, her favorite music, movies or TV shows.
 - What type of vacation does she like and not like
 - What gets her excited and what makes her bored
 - Know when to approach her and when not to
 - Know what stresses her out and what calms her down
 - Know what encourages her and what discourages her
 - Know what she likes in the bedroom and what she doesn't like in the bedroom

- What is her greatest need?
- What makes her feel most significant?
- How do you need to treat her when she's tired? lonely? worried? stressed out?
- Some women are spur of the moment, others require significant planning
- Some wives can be teased and like sarcasm, others do not
- Some wives go to bed early and rise early, others go to bed late and sleep in

-- Wives love to be understood. They love it when they don't have to explain things to their husbands, their husbands just understand. They love it when their husband "just knows."

-- Whatever the particular personality of your wife, you need to know it, understand it, and live with it

-- Bottom line: we must know and understand how to live with our wives. It is something that a husband must learn how to do because no two women are alike. Our wives should be the objects of our most diligent and careful study.

- "...someone weaker" - "a weaker vessel"; the human body is compared to a "vessel" throughout Scripture (Jer 18; Acts 9; Rom 9; 2 Tim 2). A "vessel" communicates the idea that the human body is like a piece of pottery or a clay jar.

— Some women find this offensive, but Peter is talking physically. It does not refer to mental, emotional, or spiritual acuity or intelligence.

— A husband is to protect his wife physically as well as spiritually; she is not "weak," she is "weaker" and thus in need of a husband's protection. God has wired women in such a way that they feel safest when they have they are physically and spiritually protected and cared for. They feel valued and of worth when they are protected.

-- The reason why Peter tells us to live with her according to knowledge is because she is typically weaker physically and more vulnerable than a man

-- Peter is putting some limitations on the man's actions in light of submission...because of her greater emotional sensitivity, it is possible for a husband to terrorize his wife mentally. Because she is generally weaker physically, it is possible for a husband to physically or sexually abuse his wife.

-- Because the laws were on his side, a first century husband could do these things without consequences. Peter is putting a stop to that practice straight away!

-- A husband is to protect his wife physically as well as spiritually; she is not "weak," she is "weaker" and thus in need of a husband's protection. God has wired women in such a way that they feel safest when they have they are physically and spiritually protected and cared for. They feel valued and of worth when they are protected.

— Before God, both man and woman are vessels, and both are weak. However, in the physical realm, generally speaking, the man is stronger than the woman; the wife is the weaker vessel.

- "...show her honor" - *timē*, only usage in the NT; it denotes the idea to value who she is, what she does, and to reward her with every means available to you
- It's the idea to give her what she deserves. The primary focus here is verbal: honor her in public, as well as in private.
- NIV translates as "treat her with respect" which is very weak. You can respect someone without honoring them. Honoring is a much higher trait than just respect.
- It's the idea to give her what she deserves. The primary focus here is verbal: honor her in public, as well as in private.
- "...as a fellow heir of the grace of life" - a wife is a partner with the husband in the spiritual facets of salvation. She is a spiritual equal with her husband as far as God is concerned.
- While the wife is to be in submission because she is under the authority of the husband, she is equal to the husband as far as spiritual privileges are concerned
- "the grace of life" - refers to all of the blessings that God pours into our lives, all His goodness that we don't deserve
- "...so that your prayers will not be hindered" - the reason the wife must be honored. Peter views a Christian marriage as a miniature church.
- Quarrels and bickerings in the home stifle all fellowship in prayer
- If a husband is harsh, unkind, not honoring, inconsiderate, not dwelling with his wife in knowledge, the Lord will discipline him by his fellowship with God
 - The Lord may dry up a husband's desire to pray at all
 - The Lord may just choose to ignore a husband's prayer, making them ineffective wastes of time
 - He may make the husband spiritually unhappy
 - He may cut off spiritual knowledge and understanding
- A husband's spiritual life will be affected by his relationship with his wife
- "hindered" - *egkoptō*, "cut off"; your prayers will not rise to the divine throne; they will not be heard, thus they will not be answered
- ***In the Greek, there is no adjective describing or limiting this hindrance. That means that this verse doesn't say that your prayer life will be hindered in some specific way, it means that it will hinder your prayer life in every way.***
- This is one of the scariest negative promises in all of Scripture: If a husband does not dwell with his wife in an understanding way, studying her intently in order to bless her, giving honor to his wife by valuing who she is, what she does, and rewarding her for it by every possible means, giving her what she deserves, understanding she is weaker physically thus providing and ensuring that she feels completely protected physically, spiritually, and emotionally, and understand and acknowledge that in the end, she is an equal heir with you in all the blessings that God has for you in this life and the next...if you

don't do all of these things, your prayers will simply bounce off the ceiling and God won't hear you or answer you.

— The partnership of the husband and wife works out in two ways:

- (1) they are partners in the physical realm because, together, they produce children
- (2) they are partners in the spiritual realm because they produce answered prayer

(5) Submission in daily ethics (3:8-12)

(A) Toward brothers (3:8)

8 To sum up, all of *you* be **harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble**;

8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

8 Finally, all of you must live in harmony, be sympathetic, love as brothers, and be compassionate and humble.

8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

- In bringing his discussion to a conclusion, Peter lists five characteristics that are desirable for the conduct of believers. Armed with these attitudes, believers can actively do good to those who harm us.

- "...harmonious" - *homophrones*, likeminded; emphasizes harmony and a unity of disposition, not a unity of opinion

— It is permissible to have differing opinions, but there should always be a loving attitude in the midst of these differences; a unity of disposition

— In other words, believers should display the mind of Christ as taught by Paul in Phil 2:3

- "...sympathetic" - *sympatheis*, to suffer together (Cf. Rom 12:15; Heb 4:15; 10:34)

- "...loving" - *philadelphoi*, to love as brothers (siblings); in the NT, it is used of spiritual siblings because all are children of God and all believers are brothers and sisters

- "...compassionate" - *eusplanchnoi*, tenderhearted, sensitive; to have a warm and tender attitude (Cf. Eph 4:32)

- "...humble" - *tapeinophrones*, humble; describes the inner attitude of those who are to be in subjection to authority; the opposite of being haughty and high-minded

— This unique vocabulary stresses the importance of these Christian virtues which keep one from being deceitful (*dolon*; Cf. 2:1,22).

(B) Toward enemies (3:9a)

(C) Blessings promised to the ethical (3:9b-12)

9 not returning **evil for evil** or **insult for insult**, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you would inherit a blessing.

9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

9 Do not pay others back evil for evil or insult for insult. Instead, keep blessing them, because you were called to inherit a blessing.

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

- "...evil for evil" - refers to deeds

- "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord" (Rom 12:19; Lev 19:18; Prov 24:17-18,29)

- Jesus also taught to refrain from retaliation (Matt 5:39)

- We are to seek peace by returning a blessing when receiving an insult

- Jesus said, "Pray for those who persecute you" (Matt 5:44); Paul wrote, "When we are cursed, we bless" (1 Cor 4:12)

- "...insult for insult" - refers to words

- They are not to scold, reproach, use angry words, or return curse for curse

- Since believers are to inherit the blessing, they are to give a blessing. The issue here is not to bless in order to receive a blessing. Believers will inherit the blessing (the inheritance of 1 Peter 1), therefore they should bless others.

- The point here is that Jewish believers have thus been called to render blessing for cursing. That is one reason for their salvation

- This is the fourth reminder of what they have been called to as Jewish believers (after 1:15, 2:9,21)

10 For, "THE ONE WHO **DESIRES**LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST **KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL** AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT.

10 For, "The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.

10 "For the person who wants to love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.

10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

- Peter now quotes a segment of Ps 34:12-16 but stops deliberately mid-sentence...

- "...DESIRES LIFE" - to live zestfully; refers to quality of life, not to length of life

- By fulfilling this condition (keep tongue from speaking evil and deceit), they can enjoy life on this earth

- They will love life, see good days, and live the abundant life

- "...KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL" - not railing for railing (v9); the same point is made in James 3:6-8

To live the abundant life is to live a Christ-like life and, in order to enjoy life, they must do something to obtain the enjoyment. The means, both in word and in deed, of obtaining this enjoyment is found in v10b-11...

11 "HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.

11 "He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it.

11 He must turn away from evil and do good. He must seek peace and pursue it.

11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

- One specific way to do good is to be a peacemaker, even to those who are persecuting them. This means not rendering evil for evil. A key reason for this is given in v12...

12 "FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST EVILDOERS."

12 "For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

12 For the Lord watches the righteous, and he pays attention to their prayers. But the Lord opposes those who do wrong."

12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

- The reason, from v11: God is on the lookout to bless the righteous and to discipline the evil. Thus, these believers are to render a blessing for cursing.

- Peter's quote omitted from Ps 34:16, "...to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."

— This last element will not be in this age

— This appears to parallel the Lord's reading Is 61:1-2 in Luke 4:16-21 where Jesus stopped short of the phrase, "...and the day of vengeance of our God."

— See [Dispensational Gaps](#) for a complete list of intervals in Scripture

Ps 34:12-16:

12 Who is the person who desires life And loves length of days, that he may see good?

13 Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit.

14 Turn from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, And His ears are toward their cry for help.

16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers, **To eliminate the memory of them from the earth.**

III. Suffering: discipline of the Christian (1 Peter 3:13—5:14)

(1) Practice of suffering (3:13-17)

13 And who is there to **harm** you if you prove zealous for what is good?

13 Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?

13 Who will harm you if you are devoted to doing what is good?

13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

- Peter is making the point that, although it does happen now and then, it is not natural for people to harm those who are doing good

— Believers need to be zealous for that which is good and, normally, no one will harm them

- "...harm" - verb; in Acts 7:6,19 it is used of the oppression of Israel; in Acts 12:1; 18:10 it is used of the persecution of the church; in Acts 14:2 it is used of the persecution of believers

14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND **DO NOT BE IN DREAD**,

14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,

14 But even if you should suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. "Never be afraid of their threats, and never get upset.

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

- Peter refers to Is 8:12...(the context of Is 8 is again the difference between the Remnant and non-Remnant)

- If the exception occurs and one is indeed persecuted for doing good, these Jewish believers will be blessed (Cf. Matt 5:10)

- "...DO NOT BE IN DREAD" - don't be agitated by them; don't let them get under your skin or affect your attitude

15 but **sanctify** Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to **make a defense** to everyone who asks you to give an account for **the hope that is in you**, but with **gentleness and respect**;

15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

15 Instead, exalt the Messiah as Lord in your lives. Always be prepared to give a defense to everyone who asks you to explain the hope you have.

- 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:
- "...sanctify" - "to set apart"; they are to set Messiah apart as Lord in the sphere of their hearts
 - This is also a reference to Is 8:13 because the Jesus of the NT is the Yahweh—the Jehovah—of the OT
 - If these Jewish believers understand this, it will help them to stand firm in the face of persecution
 - The point is, as Isaiah himself said, the Remnant fears only the Lord; the Remnant does not fear the persecutors
 - This verse is a death blow to Lordship Salvation; the command from Peter to make Jesus Lord of our life happens in "sanctification"
 - "...make a defense" - *apologia*, akin to "give a well reasoned reply" or "providing a thoughtful response to a question offered." It refers to a verbal, reasoned defense of why they believe as they do.
 - The Greek word is used (in one form or another) 17x in the NT (Luke 12:11; 21:14; Acts 19:33; 22:1; 24:10; 25:8; 25:15; 26:1-2,24; Rom 2:15; 1 Cor 9:3; 2 Cor 7:11; 12:19; Phil 1:7,17; 2 Tim 4:16)
 - It's used most often in the context of some form of persecution on the part of believers (as Peter used it here)
 - Peter was unequivocal in his directive to these Christ followers. Unlike Paul, who clearly said not everyone is an evangelist (Eph 4:11), Peter made a point to say everyone must be a case maker, particularly when living in a hostile environment. Peter's words apply to all of us.
 - We have a duty to know what we believe and why we believe it so we can give an answer, contend for the faith, and model Christian case making for the next generation of believers. If someone challenged you with a few simple objections, could you make a case for what you believe?
 - The Great Commission to be equipped in *apologetics* (Cf. Col 2:8)
 - "...the hope that is in you" - the subject of our defense: the hope that is in us (Cf. 1:3,20-21)
 - "...gentleness and respect" - our mastery of the "reasons" we have for our "hope in Jesus" should result in an attitude of "meekness and fear" (gentleness and respect)
 - The more we prepare ourselves for battle, the calmer and more poised we will be in the heat of the struggle; the more "ready" we are, the more gentle and respectful we will be

Apologetics

Three keys to "giving an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you":

- (1) Knowledge: the basics; the important stuff; the facts
- (2) Wisdom: using what you know in a fair and skillful way
- (3) Character: the art of NOT being a shallow, immature jerk

When your children or grandchildren ask you where you were when the voiceless and vulnerable in our time needed leaders of compassion and purpose, will you be able to truthfully tell them that you showed up, and that YOU SHOWED UP ON TIME.

16 and keep **a good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who disparage your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

16 But do this gently and respectfully, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak evil of your good conduct in the Messiah will be ashamed of slandering you.

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

- "...a good conscience" - to have a clear conscience, clean conscience

— "conscience" - to possess the God-given ability to evaluate the moral quality of human action; this includes their own (Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 1:12) and that of others (2 Cor 5:11)

- When others accuse or misrepresent believers as evildoers, believers must not respond in kind

- The object of attack in this verse is "your good conduct in the Messiah" [ISV]; non-believers condemning believers for their lifestyle

- Believers who do this, if they do not respond in kind, will be vindicated and their accusers be ashamed (put to shame)

17 For **it is better**, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

17 After all, if it is the will of God, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

- "...it is better" - Peter draws a contrast between two conditions: it is better. for righteousness' sake, to suffer at the hands of sinful men than to suffer from conscience because of evil

— In other words, it is better to be willing to suffer for the sake of a good conscience, if it is the will of God, than to sin in order to avoid having to suffer

- Sometimes it is the will of God for a believer to suffer and, in those cases, they must show a willingness to endure any and all circumstances
- The phrase is stated in the optative mood, meaning that suffering for well-doing is not God's usual will, but is His unusual will for them
- It is also of paramount importance to realize that it is our *justified* hurts that are the most dangerous in developing into that "root of bitterness" that can so easily defile us (Heb 12:15)

(2) Pattern of suffering (3:18-22)

18 For Christ also suffered for sins once for all *time*, **the just for the unjust**, so that He might **bring us to God**, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

18 For the Messiah also suffered for sins once for all, an innocent person for the guilty, so that he could bring you to God. He was put to death in a mortal body but was brought to life by the Spirit,

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

- In v18-22 Peter illustrates the principles from v13-17 using our perfect example, Jesus Christ

— This (v18) is one of the shortest and simplest, and yet one of the richest summaries given in the NT of the meaning of the Cross

- "For Christ also" - draws a parallel between the unjust suffering of believers with Christ's sufferings

— Peter is not speaking of the redemptive sense; he is speaking concerning victory through suffering

- "...suffered for sins once" - the Greek literally says, "Christ also once for sins suffered"

— Peter originally objected to this concept (Matt 16:22), but now realizes how important this concept really is

— "once" - once for all; it is something that cannot be repeated, in contrast to animal sacrifices, which had to be repeated on a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly basis

— "for sins" - because His suffering was for sins, it provided atonement

- "...*the* just for *the* unjust" - the "just" (Jesus) for the unjust (us)

— His sufferings were substitutionary, a righteous one in place of an unrighteous one

— "just" - righteous; meaning He was in complete conformity with the Law

- "...bring us to God" - the purpose of His substitutionary sacrifice; this was man's need

— The use of the dative in the Greek means it was a personal relationship with God

- Peter's point in this verse is that Jesus suffered unjustly. He was righteous, but suffered on behalf of the unrighteous. The purpose of His suffering was to bring us (the unjust) to God. His death did not destroy Him, and death will not destroy the suffering and persecuted believer.

19 in which **He also went** and **made proclamation** to the **spirits in prison**,

19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits *now* in prison,

19 in which he went and made a proclamation to those imprisoned spirits

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

- Peter now deals with the Messiah's ministry between the time of His physical death and His resurrection...

- "...He also went" - in His resurrected human spirit, He went from earth to Sheol/Hades

- "...made proclamation" - *kēryssō*, not *euanagelizō*; He didn't evangelize these spirits, He didn't present the plan of salvation. The verb is *kēryssō*, which is an announcement or proclamation.

— So between Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, He went to where these fallen angels were imprisoned and proclaimed to them that they had lost. Their attempt to corrupt the gene pool of the human race and prevent the birth of the Messiah as fully God/fully Man, had failed. Their attempt to preempt the messianic promise of Gen 3:15 had failed.

— Jesus told them that they were on the losing side of history...the Messiah was born into the world according to Gen 3:15, and He did accomplish His mission of dying on the cross, and the Messiah was about to prove to the world that He indeed was the Messiah by resurrecting from the dead on the third day.

— The demons under incarceration that their plan to corrupt the gene pool didn't work, and to confirm that the Messiah was born

— The proclamation Jesus made was that a satanic attempt to corrupt the Seed of the Woman had failed, and that He was now present. His presence in *Sheol* demonstrated that the atonement had been accomplished.

- "...spirits" - this does not refer to people who have died, who are now in Hades

— The word "spirits" is never used to describe people, dead or alive, in Scripture. However, "spirits" are frequently used to describe angels (Cf. Heb 1:14).

— Jesus did not go to Hades to proclaim victory to unbelievers who had died; He went to Hades to proclaim victory to the "sons of God" (demons/fallen angels)

— They are described in v20 as those who were disobedient when God waited patiently for Noah to finish building the ark, likely referring to the fallen angels, who were sent by Satan to procreate with human women, to corrupt the Seed of the Woman (Cf. Gen 3:15)

- "...in prison" - the proclamation that Jesus made was not to the saints who were in *Sheol/Hades*, although He did go down into the Paradise section of *Sheol/Hades*

- Jesus remained in the Paradise portion, but He proclaimed a message to the other side where the unsaved or evil spirits were confined
- Clement of Alexandria, about 200 AD, taught that Christ was sent to Hades in his spirit to proclaim the message of salvation to the souls of sinners who were imprisoned there since the flood [*Stromateis* 6.6]. *This view is inconsistent with Scripture: there is no conversion after death.*
- Augustine, about 400 AD, said that the pre-existent Christ proclaimed salvation through Noah to the people who lived before the flood [*Epistolae* 164]. However, Augustine departs from the context of v18.

The Spirits in Prison: Two Views

There are two views of who received Jesus proclamation, just prior to His resurrection: it depends on how you interpret “spirits” in v19:

- (1) The “spirits” of those who Noah preached to, but did not repent. They had rebelled against the message of God during the years the ark was being built. God declared He would not tolerate people’s wickedness forever, but in longsuffering, extended the life of Methuselah, delaying the judgment by 120 years (Gen 6:3). Since the entire human race, except Noah, was evil, God determined to “wipe mankind from the face of the earth” (Gen 6:5-9). The “spirits” referred to in v20 may be the souls of the evil human race that existed in the days of Noah. Those “spirits” are now “in prison” awaiting the final judgment of God at the end of the Age.
- (2) The “spirits” are the fallen angels, sent by Satan to corrupt the Seed of the Woman, and procreate with human women, whose offspring were the *Nephilim*. They were a grotesque race that was the by-product of human women and fallen angels. The by-product of this type of union resulted in mental and physical superhumans. That is why they are known as “the men of renown.” Satan’s actions in Gen 6 were his response to Gen 3:15, which contains the prophecy that the Messiah would be born of the Seed of the Woman and this Seed of the Woman would crush the head of Satan. That prophecy was addressed to Satan directly. Satan, knowing the Messiah would come from the Seed of the Woman (Gen 6), tried to thwart the prophecy by directing fallen angels to inter-marry with human women. He did this in an attempt to corrupt the seed so that the prophecy of Gen 3:15 could not be fulfilled. This way, Jesus would never come and die for the sins of humanity. However, Satan’s plot failed. The Noahic flood destroyed the product of the fallen angels and human women. These angels were then placed in prison, the section of Sheol or Hades called Tartarus (2 Peter 2:4).

20 who once were disobedient **when the patience of God kept waiting** in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, **eight persons**, were

brought safely through *the* water.

20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through *the* water.

20 who disobeyed long ago in the days of Noah, when God waited patiently while the ark was being built. In it a few, that is, eight persons, were saved by water.

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

- "...when" - in Christ's day, the spirits of those men to whom Noah had preached were in prison, for they had rejected the message of Noah. They had gone into *Sheol*. They were waiting for judgment, they were lost.

— For 120 years Noah had preached the Word of God. He saved his family, but no one else. It was the Spirit of Christ who spoke through Noah in Noah's day.

— In Christ's day, those who rejected Noah's message were in prison. *The thought is that Christ's death meant nothing to them just as it means nothing to a great many people today who, as a result, will also come into judgment.*

- "...patience of God kept waiting" - God's patience lasted 120 years before He sent the Flood (Gen 6:3)

— The name Methuselah means "when he dies, it will come"; Methuselah lived 969 years, the longest human lifespan ever recorded

- "...eight persons" - interestingly, the Genesis account of the flood doesn't tell us exactly who and how many people were on the ark...we learn that from Peter here

21 **Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you**—not the removal of dirt from the **flesh**, but an **appeal** to God for a **goodconscience**—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

21 Baptism, which is symbolized by that water, now saves you also, not by removing dirt from the body, but by asking God for a clear conscience based on the resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah,

21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

- "Corresponding" - *antitypos*, anti-type, a thing formed after some pattern; a thing resembling another. Peter is going to draw an analogy between the "water" of the flood, which the ark protected them through, and water baptism

- "...that" - to understand what "that" is referring to, you must go back to the closest antecedent, which is "water" (flood water) in v20
- Both "water" and "that" agree in gender in the Greek
- "...baptism now saves you" - he's not saying that you need to be baptized to go to heaven, he's saying that baptism is a sign of obedience (an outward sign of an inward reality), and as you obey God's command to be water baptized, it doesn't get you into heaven (you're already in), but your faith is maturing and growing.
- Peter's application to Jewish believers is that Noah's Ark is a type for baptism. Baptism has a correspondence to what happened in Noah's day. As the Flood wiped away the old sinful world, so water baptism pictures one's break from his old sinful life and his entrance into new life in Christ
- "saves" - Peter uses this word to describe the middle tense of our salvation, our sanctification, not our justification. We know this because Peter is writing to believers (1:2; 3:15). To interpret "saves" as referring to our justification is foreign to the context of 1 Peter, which was written to believers to help them grow in their faith.
- The flood meant Noah and his family could never return to their old life. Believers cannot go back to life without Christ (Eph 2:12; 1 Peter 1:18). Baptism says Christ's death for sin and His resurrection life have changed our identity forever.
- "...flesh" - not physical flesh, but the flesh of our sin nature
- Peter clearly points out that water baptism does nothing as far as the sin nature is concerned; it does not save someone from sin, and has nothing to do with spiritual salvation.
- "...appeal" - a word used to describe a question and answer process to reach a formal agreement
- In 2:1-3, Peter revealed that his readers are new believers. One of the things that kept them immature was their failure to be baptized, which was a lack of obedience that produced a bad conscience.
- Being water baptized would save them from a bad conscience, on the basis of Jesus' resurrection, which was the Father's approval of Jesus' work on the Cross
- "...good conscience" - one result of water baptism was to erase a guilty conscience

What happens when you're water baptized? It doesn't get you to heaven. Typically, when someone is baptized, it takes place in public and you invite family and friends to attend that event, hopefully some of them are unsaved. What kind of message do you think an event like this will send to those unsaved people? It will send a message that the person being baptized is serious about their faith and walk in Christ, and they will start treating you differently. They will look at you differently. Your outward sign shows them the inward reality of your commitment to begin following Christ.

This is why water baptism is an important step in someone's development and growth. Just as the flood waters broke Noah free from the world that was destroyed, water baptism plays a role in "breaking" you free from your "old world" (former unsaved lifestyle) because it shows your new commitment to following Christ. This is how baptism plays a role, not in our justification, but in our sanctification. See [Soteriology 10 - Baptism \(John 3:5\)](#).

Jewish Baptism

Noah's message: Judgment is coming (the flood); the way of escape was the ark; the ark saved their physical lives.

Peter's message: "judgment is coming" (the 70 AD judgment); the way of escape is water baptism; baptism will save their physical lives.

This verse is a favorite passage used by some to teach that baptism is essential for spiritual salvation. However, that is not the emphasis of this passage. Again, it is important to understand that Peter was writing specifically to Jewish believers who were part of the same generation who had rejected the Messiahship of Jesus and, therefore, were under the penalty of the judgment that was coming in 70 AD due to the Unpardonable Sin.

As Peter proclaimed in Acts 2:38, for an individual Jew to escape the judgment of 70 AD, he must do two things: First, he must repent. He must change his mind about Jesus. This action will save them spiritually. The recipients of Peter's message had already done this, but they must be baptized in order to be saved physically from the coming 70 AD judgment. It is baptism that will separate them from "that generation."

In fact, in Acts 2:40, Peter declared their need to "save themselves" from this crooked generation. The word "save" obviously refers to a physical salvation since no one can save himself spiritually. Peter's call for baptism was a call for a separation from that generation and baptism will provide this separation.

Acts 2:41 states that the believers proceeded to be baptized as a result of Peter's call. What was pointed out in the Acts account is also true here in 1 Peter 3:21. Peter is not teaching that baptism will provide spiritual salvation. It is obvious from the preceding verses, beginning with 1:1, that his readers are already saved.

22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

22 who has gone to heaven and is at the right hand of God, where angels, authorities, and powers have been made subject to him.

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

- Jesus' suffering led to His glorification, and the result is that all created beings are in subjection to Him
- These suffering saints will some day follow in His footsteps to glorification
- He is enthroned at God's right hand (Ps 110:1; Heb 1:13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2), the seat of supreme honor, to rule and reign over all creation (Col 1:15-16; 2:14-15)
- Because He is Lord, all angels are subject to Him (Cf. notes on Acts 10:36)

Some Lessons from the Flood

"As the days of Noah were, so shall the days of the Son of Man be" (Matt 24:37)

Three classes of people were facing the Flood of Noah:

- (1) Those that *perished* in the flood
- (2) Those *preserved through* the flood: Noah, his three sons, and their four wives
- (3) Those *removed prior* to the flood (Enoch)

Enoch was but one person. Yet, the Church, too, is *one* person: "the Body of Christ!" Like Enoch, this Body, His Church, will be translated to be with the Lord *before* that great and terrible Day of Lord shall come (Rev 3:10; 1 Thess 4:16-18; et al.). This may also be in view in Rev 12:5. Something happened to Enoch when his son, Methuselah, was born. "After he begat Methuselah he *walked with God* 300 years" (Gen 5:22). It was not easy in those days: widespread wickedness was reaching its peak. He was not at all "politically correct." His was not a casual stroll. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Enoch named his son, "His death shall bring." *Muth*, (125x) = "his death"; *shelach* = "shall bring." The year that Methuselah died, the judgment of the flood came. His son was a prophecy. Walking means progress as well as communion (*koinonia*). It is interesting that Enoch was preaching the Second Coming of our Lord (Jude 14-15). He also *knew* his "translation" was coming, and walked in its daily expectation.

"By *faith* Enoch was translated that he should not see death..." (Heb 11:5). Faith in what? When his message was finished, he became the first astronaut: he was "translated" (raptured). Note: He did not withdraw from his temporal life, but he "occupied" (Luke 19:13); after Methuselah he *begat sons and daughters* (Gen 5:22). [He was *not found*: his body did not remain behind...Gen 5:24.]

In Peter's Second Epistle, he will further apply prophetic implications to both Noah and Lot.